

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed on April 29, 2004, for which a one-month extension of time to respond has been requested. Claims 44-69 are now pending in this application. Claims 44 and 55 have been amended to better define Applicant's claimed invention. Claims 45 and 56 have been amended to correct an obvious error. New claims 67-69 have been added. No new matter has been introduced as a result of the amendment.

Discussion of Prior Art

The Lemelson reference cited by the Examiner fails to teach or suggest each of Applicant's claimed elements.

The Lemelson reference teaches a self-propelled, ground traveling unit having a single seizing head supported on an extendable arm which is part of a fixture that is power driven up and down a column supported by a carriage. The carriage is track or belt driven along the ground (col. 4, lines 54-59). The manipulator 10 comprises a base or carriage 20 having an upstanding column or guide way 11 supported thereon and supporting a television camera 30 at the upper end thereof and a turret carriage 13 which may be driven up and down the column as well as being rotated with the column on base 20 (col. 6, lines 4-9). Thus, the entire assembly including column 11 may be selectively rotated to position the jaw assembly 25 in alignment with most any object or article located adjacent the manipulator 10 by suitably controlling the operation of motors 19, 17 and 39 (col. 6, lines 51-55). The carriage 20 contains means for supporting two separate cleated belts or tracks 23A and 23B, each of which is separately power driven by a separate reversible gear motor (col. 6, lines 56-67).

The Lemelson reference is silent with respect to a method as claimed by Applicant. As set forth e.g., in claims 44, Applicant's method carries out working steps on miniaturized modules in at least one workstation. The at least one work station is one of a pick up station, a

test station, a removal station, a coating station and a mounting station. The workstation is arranged on a base unit. A module carrier having a carrier head and a base element is provided, enabling movement of the carrier head relative to the work station for carrying out the working steps by (i) enabling movement of said carrier head relative to a base element of said module carrier in at least three directions of at least three linear axes of movement, each linear axis allowing movement in a direction transverse to the other ones and said movement being provided by a respective positioning unit arranged between said carrier head and said base element; and (ii) enabling movement of said base element on said base unit and relative to said base unit in a direction of at least one axis, as set forth in Applicant's amended claim 44.

The Lemelson reference discloses a self-driving robot but does not disclose carrying out working steps in specific workstations. Further, Lemelson does not disclose or suggest arranging a workstation on a base unit with respect to which a module carrier is moveable. Still further, the Lemelson reference does not teach or remotely suggest at least three linear axes of movement and at least one tilting axis, as set forth in Applicant's claim 44, but merely teaches two linear axes on its robot and no tilting axis for movement of a carry head with respect to a base unit.

Moreover, the Lemelson reference fails to teach or suggest that the carrier head can move relative to the base element by at least three linear axes, with a fourth axis being a tilting axis and a fifth axis being a rotational axis, as set forth in Applicant's claim 67. The Lemelson reference merely teaches two linear axes and an additional rotational axis.

Finally, the Lemelson reference is silent with respect to at least three axes of movement with respect to the base element and that a laser beam is provided to the at least on work station in order to carry out at least one of said working steps, as set forth in Applicant's claim 69.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art in view of the Lemelson reference, or any of the other prior art references of record, taken alone or in combination. Moreover, since independent claims 44, 55, 67 and 69 are not obvious, then dependent claims 45-54, 56-66 and 68 are believed to be allowable.

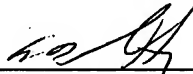
Further remarks regarding the asserted relationship between Applicant's claims and the prior art are not deemed necessary, in view of the foregoing discussion. Applicant's silence as to

any of the Examiner's comments is not indicative of acquiescence to the stated grounds of rejection.

Conclusion

In view of the above, entry of the present amendment and reconsideration and allowance of each of the claims is respectfully requested. If there are any remaining issues that need to be addressed in order to place this application into condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew D. Gathy
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Registration No. 46,441
Law Office of Barry R. Lipsitz
755 Main Street
Monroe, CT 06468
(203) 459-0200

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